On the basis of the per capita quantities of consumption reported in the National Sample Survey Organisation's 61st Round (2004-2005) Report and the Population Projections given by the office of the Registrar General of India, the requirement of foodgrains, including seed, feed and wastage is estimated at 180.05 million tonnes in 2005-06 and 182.65 million tonnes in 2006-07.

(c) With the amendment of the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act for deregulation of the marketing system, the farmers now have more options to sell their produce to the prospective buyers. If the market price is more than the Minimum Support Price (MSP) fixed by the Government, farmers are free to realize a higher price by selling their produce in the open market. As a result, the prices in the market during the harvesting season also are ruling above the MSP and benefiting the farmers.

As per the latest information available large private companies such as Cargill, ITC, Adani Enterprises, Britania, Delhi Flour Mills, Agricore, Sri Nangali Agro and AWB India together have declared purchase of around 18.15 lakh tonnes of wheat in Rabi Marketing Season 2007-08.

National Guarantee Act

29. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Guarantee Act is under active consideration of Government; and

(b) whether it would be possible to provide 100 per cent crop insurance coverage to farmers in view of suicides of farmers by this Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Probably, Hon'ble Member has referred to the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) which was enacted on 7.9.2005. It does not provide Crop Insurance coverage to farmers.

Integrated and holistic approach for better yields

30. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that agriculture sector needs an integrated and holistic approach and not a fragmented one;

(b) whether Government are also aware that there are gaps between actual yields and the yields that are technologically feasible as these yields increase potential which vary from 40 per cent and 100 per cent; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken at the Central and State level to make a visible impact in the next three to four years in the agriculture sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There are gaps between actual yield obtained and that are technologically feasible. The yield increase potential varies from crop to crop. In the recently conducted frontline demonstrations on pulses, oilseeds, rice, wheat and cotton where different

technologies including varieties and hybrids were demonstrated, an yields increase ranging from no advantage to 50% yield advantage was observed.

(c) The ICAR Institutes and the centres of different All India Coordinated Research Projects located at SAUs are developing improved varieties/hybrids, crop production and protection technologies and conducting frontline demonstrations on farmers' field to demonstrate the yield advantage of new technologies. In addition, Government are implementing Programmes/Schemes like National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Area, Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize, promotion of Integrated Nutrient Management, Micro Irrigation and other Programmes/Schemes to improve Productivity of different crops. The strategies to achieve high growth include focus on potential areas, regionally differentiated strategies, crop diversification and the scientific management of natural resources.

Condition of fishermen

31. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed the condition of the fishermen in the country during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details regarding the Centrally sponsored Board/Federation for implementation of various schemes of the Central Government; and

(d) the total amount of funds provided during the last three years to this Board/ Federation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) The Government of India has carried out Marine Fisheries Census in 2005, which *inter-alia* provides certain indicators of welfare of marine fishermen. In addition an impact evaluation study of the National Scheme of Welfare of Fishermen, which is a Centrally sponsored scheme being implemented by States/UTs. The study has been conducted by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Consultancy Services (NABCONS) Pvt. Ltd. The study report has *inter-alia* pointed out various strengths and weaknesses of the programme and suggested modifications in the guidelines for enhancing welfare of fishermen while recommending continuance of the scheme during the Eleventh Plan.

(c) and (d) National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) has been set up in September, 2006 with its headquarters at Hyderabad to realize the untapped potential of fisheries sector in inland and marine fish capture, culture, processing and marketing of fish, and over all growth of fisheries sector with the application of modern tools of research and development including biotechnology for optimizing production and productivity from fisheries. An amount of Rs.30.00 crore was released to the Board in 2006-07.

The National Federation of Fishermen's Co-operative Ltd. (FISHCOPFED) is a national level Co-operative Federation established under the Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act, 2002 which operates under the administrative control of the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India. The objective of the FISHCOPFED is to facilitate, coordinate and